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Borderwork beyond Inside/Outside? Frontex, the Citizen–Detective and the War on Terror

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Abstract. The article begins by noting Etienne Balibar’s insight that the borders of Europe may be vacillating but that they are changing and multiplying rather than simply disappearing. Drawing upon this insight, it seeks to investigate ways in which responses to the threat of terrorism in the EU have involved bordering practices that to some extent challenge commonsensical understandings of what and where the borders of Europe should be according to the conventional ‘inside/outside’ model. In this context, two cases are examined: the recent surveillance activities of the new EU border management agency Frontex in Africa; and the emergence of surveillance strategies arising from the linking of notions of European citizenship with EU-wide counter-terrorism initiatives following 9/11. It is argued that new border vocabularies are necessary in order for emerging forms of borderwork to be identified and interrogated in the context of the on-going ‘war on terror’.

Introduction

Elspeth Guild (2003, 2005, 2006, 2007) has pointed to the ways in which the borders of Europe are not necessarily where they are meant to be according to the conventional inside/outside model.

In both law and practice the border for the movement of persons to and within Europe is no longer consistent with the edges of the physical territory of the member-states (Guild, 2005, p. 1).

For Guild (2005), the concept of the border in this context relates specifically to a site where a control takes place on the movement of subjects into or within the European Union (EU) and it is this definition that the present article employs throughout. Guild claims that, since the Schengen Agreement in 1985, a raft of legislative changes has meant that sites of control over the movement of subjects have been disaggregated from the territory of member-states: “these borders may be found anywhere” (Guild, 2003, p. 103). Hélène Jorry makes a similar argument...
The growing ‘interpenetration of internal and external security’ highlights the evolution of border controls becoming more and more differentiated, detached from the territorial logic and more targeted at specific groups (Jorry, 2007, p. 1).

Moreover, William Walters (2002, 2006) and Sergio Carrera (2007) have demonstrated ways in which new technologies such as biometrics disperse the EU’s borders spatially and temporally within and beyond its territorial confines. Etienne Balibar captures the primary insight of this critical literature when he writes

We are living in a conjecture of the vacillation of borders—both of their layout and their function—that is at the same time a vacillation of the very notion of the border, which has become particularly equivocal (Balibar, 1998, p. 217).

This article is inspired by Balibar’s observation that whilst borders in Europe are vacillating this does not mean that they are disappearing. On the contrary, borders are being “multiplied and reduced in their localisation, ... thinned out and doubled, ... no longer the shores of politics but ... the space of the political itself” (Balibar, 1998, p. 220). It seeks to contribute to the literature by focusing on the way in which, as a form of control on movement, new surveillance strategies employed in the on-going war on terror in Europe can be read as emergent bordering practices that complicate a logic of inside/outside as diagnosed by R. B. J. Walker (1993). In this context, I analyse two cases: the surveillance operations of the new EU border management agency ‘Frontex’ in Africa; and emerging surveillance practices within the EU arising from the connection between notions of European citizenship and counter-terrorism initiatives following 9/11. It is argued that, whilst both examples are instances of what Chris Rumford refers to in the Introduction of this Special Issue as ‘borderwork’, neither conforms to the prevalent notion that borders are located solely at the geographical outer edge of the polity.

First, the establishment of Frontex will be briefly contextualised and situated within the broader historical trajectory of the ‘Europeanisation’ of member-states’ borders since 1985. However, the discussion demonstrates that the move towards ‘integrated border security’ in the aftermath of 9/11 has increasingly focused on risk and the surveillance of non-EU citizens, prompting new bordering practices hundreds of miles away from the geographical edges of EU territory. These innovations are explored against the backdrop of recent Frontex surveillance activities in the Canary Islands and Africa (known as ‘Operation HERA I and HERA II’). Secondly, the article goes on to consider other forms of bordering practices that directly involve EU citizens both as objects and agents of surveillance. In recent years, there have been efforts to connect European citizenship with anti-terror initiatives as outlined in the Hague Programme. I argue that the possibility of the mobilisation of European citizens as agents of surveillance constitutes a new form of generalised borderwork whereby ‘good’ subjects are constantly on the look-out for ‘suspicious’ or ‘risky’ subjects. In turn, this border performance trains citizen–detectives to (re)produce the central dynamics of the war on terror, which is played out through and across bodies in everyday life. Whilst this innovation in the role of citizens in borderwork is arguably in its infancy in Europe as a whole, I demonstrate how it is already commonplace...
in London with reference to a poster campaign issued by the London Metropolitan Police service in the aftermath of the bombings of 7 July 2005 (hereafter 7/7). The paper concludes that the further development of alternative border imaginaries is necessary otherwise analysts run the risk of overlooking innovations in bordering practices and their political implications for citizens and non-citizens alike.

**Borderwork I: Frontex**

The main role of Frontex, which was established as a decentralised EU regulatory agency with financial, administrative and legal autonomy in Warsaw in 2004 (Council Regulation EC 2007/2004/OJ L 349/25.11.2004), is to promote a “pan-European model of integrated border security” (http://www.frontex.europa.eu/). This pan-European model is comprised of three basic tiers: tier one involves the exchange of information and co-operation between member-states on issues relating to immigration and repatriation; tier two incorporates border and customs control focusing on surveillance, border checks and risk analysis; and tier three encompasses co-operation between border guards, customs and police in non-EU states. Article Two of the founding Regulation outlines the principle tasks of Frontex as follows:

- (a) To co-ordinate operational co-operation between member-states in the field of management of external borders.
- (b) To assist member-states on training of national border guards, including the establishment of common training standards.
- (c) To carry out risk analyses.
- (d) To follow up on the development of research relevant for the control and surveillance of external borders.
- (e) To assist member-states in circumstances requiring increased technical and operational assistance at external borders.
- (f) To provide member-states with the necessary support in organising joint return operations (Frontex Regulation, 2004).

By now, there are a number of academic treatments of Frontex and readers seeking a detailed account of its historical background and areas of legal competence would do well to consult these sources (Carrera, 2007; Guild, 2005; Jorry, 2007). The intention here is not to provide such an account but rather to outline: first, how the notion of ‘integrated border security’ associated with the development of Frontex has emerged as one of many EU responses to the perceived threats of the war on terror since 9/11; and, secondly, how aspects of the operationalisation of the notion of ‘integrated border security’ can be said to challenge conventional understandings of what and where borders are supposed to be according to the inside/outside model.

**Integrated Border Security in Europe and the War on Terror**

According to the Frontex website, the origins of the agency lie in the broad context of a series of moves designed to implement the principle of the free movement of people as originally provided for under Article Three of the 1957 Treaty of Rome. In 1985, France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands signed the Schengen Agreement, pledging to apply the free movement principle by
abolishing controls within their common borders. Two years later, the Single European Act (SEA) came into effect stipulating that: “the internal market should consist of an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is ensured in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty”. A Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement was drafted and signed in June 1990 and, in the following six years, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Austria, Denmark, Finland and Sweden joined the original five member-states. However, it was not until the realisation of the Amsterdam Treaty in May 1999 that the Schengen acquis was incorporated into the first pillar of the EU. This incorporation went hand-in-hand with the expressed aim of establishing the EU as a borderless “area of freedom, security and justice” (Article 2 Treaty of the European Union).

Accompanying the abolition of internal borders were a series of ‘compensatory measures’, including closer co-operation between the police, customs and judiciary across member-states via the Schengen Information System (SIS), the implications of which for immigration and asylum have been covered extensively (see for example, den Boer, 1995; Geddes, 2000; Huysmans, 1995; and Walters, 2002). Thus, Guild et al. (2007) note that ‘freedom’ and ‘security’ have been established as antithetical values requiring a ‘balanced’ approach and it is in precisely these terms that the operation of Frontex has been framed.

Frontex complements and provides particular added value to the national border management systems of the member-states and to the freedom and security of their citizens (Frontex, 2005, p. 1).

In this way, the security imperatives of Frontex are supposedly tempered by the EU’s commitment to freedom.

On the one hand, the development of Frontex can be located within this broad historical trajectory of the Europeanisation of member-states’ borders: “a further institutionalisation in the on-going process of a technocratically-driven integration project” (Neal, 2007, p. 24). On the other hand, the role of Frontex and integrated border security has also been presented as a specific solution to the problem of the need to respond to the threat of terrorism in the EU since 9/11. According to Thierry Balzacq and Sergio Carrera (2007) the EU’s response to the war on terror has been characterised by psychological and operational innovations. The former have involved reassurance initiatives intended to strengthen the bonds between member-states such as the Council’s declarations in the aftermath of the Madrid bombings (hereafter 3/11) and 7/7 and provision for a European Day for the Victims of Terrorism. The latter have consisted of transnational co-operation through the ‘EU Declaration on Combating Terrorism’, the common use of biometric identifiers, information sharing and, critically for the purposes of this article, integrated border security. In the ‘Declaration on Combating Terrorism’, published on 25 March 2004, Article Six stresses that the solidarity of the EU goes hand-in-hand with the need to strengthen border controls. Similarly, the ‘Council Declaration on the EU Response to the London Bombings’ declares that “its immediate priority is to build on the existing strong EU framework for pursuing and investigating terrorists across borders”. Moreover the Revised EU Terrorism Action Plan of 9 March 2007 refers to the role of Frontex in conducting “effective risk analysis” of Europe’s borders (Article 2.5) and impeding terrorists’ movement by maximising “the capacity of existing border systems to monitor, and, where relevant, counter the movement of suspected terrorists.
across our internal and external borders” (Article 3.2). Yet, as the next section will go on to illustrate in light of recent Frontex operations, moves towards integrated border security have nevertheless complicated how the traditional separation between ‘internal’ and ‘external’ realms referred to earlier plays out in practice.

Is the Border no Longer at the Border?

According to Article 2(a) of the founding Regulation, the expressed aim of Frontex is “to co-ordinate operational co-operation between member-states in the field of management of external borders”. In this way it might be argued that the use of the language of ‘internal’ and ‘external’ maps onto the conventional logic of inside/outside where the former relates to the EU and the latter to its Other. However, nowhere in the regulation is a definition of what ‘external’ borders are understood to be or where they are supposed to be located. Moreover, adopting Guild’s (2005) definition of ‘the border’ as a site where a control takes place on the movement of subjects into or within the EU, it is possible to identify how the activity of Frontex in practice challenges commonsensical notions about the location of the border that separates the internal from the external realm. Such a control on subjects’ movement increasingly takes place hundreds of miles away from member-states’ territories and the geographical edge of the EU. This ‘off-shoring’ of the border complicates the geopolitical imaginary of the EU as an entity with a readily identifiable inside: paradoxically the inside is projected externally. This disaggregation between the territorial limits of the EU on the one hand and the limits of the ability of the EU to control movement on the other is illustrated by the recent surveillance activity of Frontex in Africa.

According to one news report, there were 16,404 documented cases of illegal immigrants arriving from Africa into Spanish territory between January and September 2006 (Bailey, 2006). On average during this period, between 100 and 400 Africans were attempting to enter the EU via the Canary Islands every day. Many travelled (and continue to travel) on overcrowded Cayucos—Senegalese fishing boats—each carrying 70–150 people. Lists of some of those who did not make it are accessible by typing ‘dead refugees in fortress Europe’ into Google. As Sergio Carrera has pointed out, the situation in the Canaries was presented by the EU and Spanish officials as an “unprecedented humanitarian crisis in the whole of Europe” (Carrera, 2007, p. 12). The institutional response to this crisis was the deployment of Frontex personnel from France, Portugal, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK between 17 July and 31 October (http://www.frontex.europa.eu). This operation, known as HERA I, was intended to “support the Spanish authorities in [the] identification of the migrants and [the] establishment of their countries of origin” (http://www.frontex.europa.eu). In this way, the first phase of Frontex activity in the Canary Islands reflects what might be considered to be conventional borderwork at traditional border sites associated with the implementation of a control on movement of subjects at airports, ports and ‘edges’ of sovereign territory.

However, the second phase of the Frontex operation from 11 August to 15 December departed from this orthodoxy. HERA II brought together technical border surveillance equipment from several member-states with the expressed aim of preventing “migrants from leaving the shores on the long sea journey” (http://www.frontex.europa.eu). In order to achieve this, Frontex mobilised patrol boats supplied by Italy and Portugal off the West African coast near
Mauritania, Senegal and Cape Verde (Bailey, 2006). Moreover, surveillance planes from Finland and Italy were flown along the coast and deeper into African territory in an attempt to deter would-be migrants from making the journey to the EU (Bailey, 2006). Carrera (2007) refers to the operations of Frontex in Africa as a form of ‘pre-border surveillance’ but, employing Guild’s notion of a border as a site where a control is made on the movement of subjects into or within the EU, it is perhaps more accurate to see these missions as European border performances albeit hundreds of miles away from Europe. Therefore, what is so interesting and significant about HERA II is that it highlights the way in which the border-work of Frontex takes place in spaces other than what we might conventionally understand to be ‘border’ areas. In this sense, HERA II complicates simplistic understandings of the categories of inside/outside, internal/external and EU space/non-EU space and exemplifies Balibar’s pithy observation that in Europe “borders are no longer at the border” (Balibar, 1998, pp. 217–218). Yet, as we shall see in the next section, it is also possible to identify another form of border-work in the EU: one that not only complicates the dominant inside/outside model but also involves the direct mobilisation of EU citizens in the context of the ongoing war on terror.

**Borderwork II: The Citizen–Detective**

Guild et al. (2007) argue that the EU’s response to the perceived threat of terrorism in the aftermath of 9/11, 3/11 and 7/7 has witnessed a shift from traditional security practices to technologies of surveillance. Again, as a control on the movement of subjects, surveillance can be understood as a form of bordering practice: a portal that monitors people and allows for their categorisation. So far only one example of this borderwork has been considered: the surveillance of non-EU citizens by Frontex personnel in Africa. However, it is also possible to identify ways in which bordering practices developed in response to the war on terror involve EU citizens more directly: as both objects of surveillance by authorities such as the police but also as agents of surveillance so that, effectively, citizens also become Europe’s border guards.

**Refrains of Suspicion: Anti-terror Initiatives and the Surveillance of Citizens in Europe**

In the Mid-Term Report of the CHALLENGE Project on the Changing landscape of European liberty and security, Guild et al. (2007) argue that a climate of suspicion has become a paradigmatic feature of political life post-9/11. However, the authors of the report discern a qualitative difference between the responses to the threat of terrorism in the EU compared with the US. On the one hand, Guild et al. point to the way in which the US has witnessed the rise of a generalised suspicion whereby any citizen may constitute a threat to national security imperatives. On the other hand, they claim that the overall situation in the EU, even after 3/11 and 7/7, has been less extreme than in the US. Yet, despite the refusal to opt for the military solution in the aftermath of the Madrid bombings, Guild et al. warn that

> While the quasi-totality of the EU countries has not formally declared situations of emergency or a state of exception, the societal climate against migrants and foreigners, especially those coming from Islamic
countries, has contributed to the support of the US position in many political circles (Guild et al., 2007, p. 8).

Moreover, Bigo and Carrera (2004) have pointed to the way in which 3/11 boosted the scope for the development of existing exceptional practices in the field of security in Europe. Such development can be traced in the EU Declaration on Combating Terrorism, published soon after 3/11, which provided for: enhanced information gathering about suspected terrorists through new surveillance techniques; more efficient information sharing between law enforcement authorities of the member-states; the strengthening of border controls through Frontex surveillance initiatives; the incorporation of biometric features into passports and visas; a common EU database of passenger information for aviation security; and the development of surveillance, early warning alert and response systems and procedures to deal with the consequences of any terrorist attack. Given the increasing interweaving of internal and external security, the subordination of justice to the imperatives of the intelligence services and the proliferation of technologies of surveillance, Guild et al. argue that EU anti-terror initiatives threaten to become worse than the problems they seek to address: “these security measures will increase insecurity and fears while aiming at establishing a transnational system that profiles and monitors everyone” (Guild et al., 2005, p. 5).

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s concept of the refrain offers one way of pushing forward critical thinking about what is at stake in the cultivation of a climate of suspicion within the EU. In A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia Deleuze and Guattari refer to the refrain as “any aggregate of matters of expression that draws a territory and develops into territorial motifs and landscapes” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 356). The refrain performs the function of an assemblage that brings together an array of phenomena in order to produce territory: it is concerned with “the ‘holding together’ of heterogeneous elements” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 357). It is necessary for the refrain to perform this “holding together” because territory does not pre-exist but is constituted by the performance that marks it: “The territory is not primary in relation to the qualitative mark; it is the mark that makes the territory” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 348). Thus, Deleuze and Guattari point to the role that the refrain plays in diverse contexts: birds sing to mark out their territory (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 344); radios and TVs act as “sound walls around every household and mark territory” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 343); and tattoos have the effect of territorialising bodies (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 353). In this way the refrain can be read as form of bordering: one that produces borders by permeating the territory it performatively creates.

On this basis, it is possible to read the cultivation of a climate of suspicion in the EU as a refrain that binds member-states together, thereby reinforcing a sense of common identity and purpose in Europe. Hence, the opening of the EU Declaration on Combating Terrorism uses the threat of terrorism to (re)produce a vision of what Europe is: “the callous and cowardly attacks [in Madrid] served as a terrible reminder of the threat posed by terrorism to our society. Acts of terrorism are attacks against the values on which the Union is founded” (emphasis added). Furthermore, the refrain of suspicion enables the enactment and legitimisation of certain illiberal practices, such as heightened surveillance not only of non-EU citizens in Africa but also of EU citizens throughout Europe. It is precisely the decoupling of practices of policing and law enforcement from juridical controls in the
name of responding to the threat of terrorism that have enabled “more possibilities for control and surveillance for the police and intelligence services” in the first place (Guild et al., 2007, pp. 7–8). Thus, Guild argues that enhanced surveillance of EU citizens, together with unprotected data sharing via the Schengen Information System (SIS), runs counter to the Commission’s goal of connecting with the people of Europe.

If the Commission wants to communicate with the citizen and for the citizen honestly to engage with EU law and policy, it must convince the citizen that his/her data, opinions, activities and positions are protected against improper use (Guild, 2007, p. 4).

However, what Guild fails to note is the way in which the refrain of suspicion in the EU has not only led to the surveillance of EU citizens by authorities such as the police. Rather, as the next section goes on to outline, it has also prompted moves to connect citizenship with anti-terrorist initiatives so that surveillance as a bordering practice becomes more generalised among suspicious populations. Furthermore, against the view held by Guild et al. that such generalised suspicion is only characteristic of the US, these practices are already commonplace in certain parts of the EU.

**Vigilante Surveillance in Europe: The (Re)emergence of the Citizen–detective?**

At the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism and Security, 8–11 March 2005, in Madrid, Secretary General of the UN Kofi Annan called for the involvement of civil society in combating terrorism world-wide. In a similar vein, the EU has recently linked notions of European citizenship with anti-terror initiatives: the Hague Programme, for example, places the two together as part of its ‘Ten Priorities’ for the strengthening of the area of freedom, security and justice. The role of the citizen in helping to counter the threat of terrorism is further emphasised by the DG for Justice, Freedom and Security. According to the recently published pamphlet ‘Terrorism: the European Response’ it is asserted that: “The battle against terrorism requires the mobilisation of all citizens to guarantee freedom and security for all” (emphasis added). Furthermore, in his ‘Letter to European Citizens on 11 March 2006—the Second European Day for the Victims of Terrorism’, the Vice-President for Justice, Freedom and Security Minister Franco Frattini wrote: “The European Union is committed to providing its citizens with an area of freedom, justice, security and prosperity. Terrorism is a threat to the realisation of this objective. . . . Fighting terrorism requires strong will and endurance by all of us” (emphasis added). Some of the interesting questions raised by this discourse include: What is expected of citizens in contributing to counter-terrorism initiatives? What is at stake politically in the linking of citizenship and counter-terrorism initiatives? Who are the ‘we’ that is assumed in these texts and who is left out of this framing, why and with what consequences?

Writing in 1938, Walter Benjamin claimed that: “In times of terror, when everyone is something of a conspirator, everybody will be in the position of having to play detective” (Benjamin, 2003, p. 21). In an uncanny reflection of Benjamin’s insight some 70 years ago, the Metropolitan Transport Agency (MTA) in New York has recently begun a poster and radio advertisement campaign called ‘The Eyes of New York’. Following Benjamin, the refrain of suspicion in the US after 9/11 has led to the (re)emergence of what I call the figure of the
‘citizen–detective’ in the war on terror. Under the banner “If you see something, say something” ‘good’ citizens are enjoined to be on the lookout for suspicious activity (see Figure 1). Katherine N. Knapp, Executive Director of the MTA, explains the rationale for the campaign as follows:

We want to reinforce among our customers how important it is that they continue to be aware of their surroundings and to report suspicious activity or packages. As events in Madrid, London, and other cities have demonstrated, the threat of terrorism remains very real, and we need to remind ourselves not to become complacent (http://www.mta.info).

Whilst the stated aim of the campaign is to avoid complacency in order achieve security, it is not at all clear that this sort of approach is successful in accomplishing its expressed goals. On the contrary, as a number of critical writers have noted, it is an approach that can lead to many more problems:

Most measures undertaken under the banner of safety on a large scale are divisive; they show mutual suspicion, set people apart, prompt them to sniff enemies and conspirators behind every contention or dissent (Guild et al., 2005, p. 4).

Similarly, Judith Butler has highlighted how the imperative for ‘good’ citizens to be on the lookout for ‘risky’ people constitutes “a potential licence for prejudicial perception” (Butler, 2004, p. 77). Butler argues that the cultivation of an objectless suspicion all too easily translates into “a virtual mandate to heighten racialised ways of looking and judging in the name of national security” (Butler, 2004, p. 77). In this way, a certain form of “indefinite containment” permeates public culture “outside the prison walls, on the subway, in the airports, on the street, in the workplace” (Butler, 2004, p. 77). Furthermore, the racialisation of suspicion translates into acts of violence in these otherwise ‘normal’ everyday settings—as

![Figure 1. The ‘16 million eyes’ campaign in New York, 2007.](image-url)
demonstrated by the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes in Stockwell Station, London, on 22 July 2005 (Pugliese, 2006; Vaughan-Williams, 2007).

Contrary to the argument made by Guild et al. about the qualitative difference between the US and the EU, it is possible to identify how the refrain of suspicion in the context of the war on terror has also led to the (re)emergence of the citizen–detective in parts of Europe. Since 9/11, the London Metropolitan Police Service (the ‘Met’) has led a similar campaign to the MTA in New York. The Met’s ‘watchful eyes’ poster, launched in 2002, depicted all-seeing eyes in the sky above an iconic red London bus accompanied by the message: “CCTV and Metropolitan Police on buses are just two ways we’re making your journey more secure” (see Figure 2). This poster, reminiscent of the totalitarian scenario portrayed in George Orwell’s novel *1984*, reflects a form of ‘top–down’ surveillance akin to Frontex-commissioned planes flying over African territory.

However, a series of follow-up campaigns in the UK have followed the MTA’s move away from this expansive optic surveillance of populations towards haptic surveillance among populations. The first of these campaigns featured the ‘Life Savers’ posters launched by the Met in March 2004 soon after the Madrid bombings (see Figures 3 and 4). In a press statement accompanying the launch of the ‘Life Savers’ campaign, James Hart, Commissioner of Police for the City of London, echoed the message of Kofi Anan and the DG for Justice Security and Freedom by emphasising the role that citizens must play in anti-terrorist initiatives.

The public’s role in the fight against terrorism cannot be underestimated and the City community is no exception. . . . As well as remaining alert to suspicious objects or individuals during their daily routines, people who

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**Figure 2.** ‘Secure beneath the watchful eyes’ poster, 2002.
specifically work in the financial sector can also play a significant part by reporting suspicious financial activity (BBC News On-line, 2004).

This message has been reiterated in the Met’s subsequent anti-terror poster campaigns released in January 2006 and March 2007. Under the banner ‘If you suspect it report it’, citizen–detectives are again asked to beware of unusual financial activity: ‘Terrorists need funding. Have any cheque or credit card transactions made you suspicious?’ The image accompanying the poster is of a receipt, implying that people seeking their money back on a previous transaction may be financing terrorist operations. Two other posters in the series focus on movement: in particular, the use of vehicles (‘Terrorists need transport. Has a vehicle sale or
rental made you suspicious?) and the river (‘Terrorists could use the river. If you live or work on the river, has anything you’ve seen made you suspicious?’). Previous campaigns set the work of the citizen–detective solely against the backdrop of what is conventionally considered to be public space: vigilance is called for in railway stations, buses and train carriages. However, seemingly in a departure from this model, the latest campaigns also enjoin the citizen–detective to operate somewhat closer to home. There is a call not only for the surveillance of domestic storage spaces (‘Terrorists need storage. Are you suspicious of anyone using garages, lock-ups or storage space?’) but also apartment blocks and even individual properties, as Figure 5 illustrates (‘Terrorists need places to live. Are you suspicious of your tenants or neighbours?’). Thus, the citizen–detective is asked not only to be active in civic spaces but also in what might otherwise be considered domestic spaces so that the classical distinction between public and private can no longer be rigorously maintained.

The blurring of the public–private distinction is reflected and taken even further in other forms of citizen surveillance initiatives such as the emergence of a new television channel in east London allowing residents to monitor local CCTV cameras (BBC News On-line, 2006). This £12 million government-funded project in Shoreditch asks residents to pay £3.50 per week in exchange for cheap telephone calls, a free digital set-top box and access to over 400 CCTV cameras as part of a ‘Community Safety Channel’ (http://www.londonconnects.gov.uk). By signing up to this scheme, citizen–detectives can monitor activity in their area, view a ‘usual suspects’ line-up of people wanted by the Met and receive live ‘community safety alerts’. According to Atul Hatwell of the Shoreditch Digital Bridge Project

The CCTV element is part curiosity, like a 21st-century version of Big Brother, and partly about security … this is a much more intensive

Figure 5. ‘If you suspect it report it’ campaign, January 2006.
neighbourhood watch, where everyone can be involved in the fight against crime (The Sunday Times, 2006).

However, human rights groups such as ‘Asbo Concern’ have pointed to the possibilities for misuse.

The community safety channel is a gimmick ... There are professionals trained to monitor CCTV and it should be left to them. Here, you will have a situation of people spying on each other, which raises concerns about vigilantism and vulnerable people such as children being bullied on CCTV' (BBC News Online, 2006).

What is common to the Met’s anti-terror campaign and the CCTV channel in Shoreditch is a lack of clarity about precisely what citizen–detectives should be on the lookout for. We are not told what it is about getting a refund, owning a white van, being near a river, using a garage or living in a block of flats that is particular to terrorist activity. Rather, the suspicion is generalised and objectless and, to reiterate Butler’s argument, the concern is that it is all too easily translatable into racialised forms of perception. According to the radio advertisement that accompanies the poster series (London Met, 2007), the role of the citizen–detective is cast merely as an informant.

Female voice-over: How d’you tell the difference between someone just video-ing a crowded place and someone who’s checking it out for a terrorist attack?

How can you tell if someone’s buying unusual quantities of stuff for a good reason or if they’re planning to make a bomb?

What’s the difference between someone just hanging around and someone behaving suspiciously?

How can you tell if they’re a normal everyday person, or a terrorist?

Male voice-over: The answer is, you don’t have to.

If you call the confidential Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321, the specialist officers you speak to will analyse the information. They’ll decide if and how to follow it up.

You don’t have to be sure. If you suspect it, report it.

Call the Anti-Terrorist Hotline on 0800 789 321 in confidence.

However, as the criticism of the Shoreditch project suggests, there is potentially a fine line between the citizen–detective as an informant and the citizen–detective as a vigilante. A number of writers have pointed to the absence of a tradition of work on the theory and practice of vigilantism in the context of the discipline of politics and international relations (Johnston, 1996; Abrahams, 1998; and Doty, 2007). Nevertheless, according to Les Johnston, vigilantism can be understood as a popular strategy, arising as a reaction to social deviance (real, threatened, or imputed), whose aim is to offer people the assurance that an established system of order will prevail (Johnston, 1996, p. 231).

Recently, Roxanne Lynn Doty has applied and developed this understanding to analyse the practices of anti-immigrant activists along the Mexico–US border (Doty, 2007). Doty suggests that groups like the Border Solution Task Force and Minutemen Project are perhaps better thought of as neo-vigilantes because, whilst they remain unofficial and unauthorised, their civilian border patrols
entail co-operation with—rather than activities necessarily against—the law. Echoing Benjamin earlier, Doty claims that such border neo-vigilantism reflects the way in which “everyone is potentially ‘the police’, faceless creators and upholders of the social order” (Doty, 1997, p. 132). What is interesting in attempts to produce citizen-detectives in the London case is that it is precisely institutions of the state (such as the London Met) that are encouraging—and therefore legitimising—quasi-vigilante amateur surveillance practices. Furthermore, the key point here is not whether the various campaigns to foster vigilance among citizen-detectives actually work (although this sort of empirical enquiry will no doubt become increasingly vital as these technologies of surveillance become further embedded in social practices). This is because, as Brian Massumi has argued in the context of the effect of the colour-coded alert system of the US Department of Homeland Security, the social diversity of the population means that there can be “no one-to-one correlation between official speech or image production and the form and content of response” (Massumi, 2005, p. 34). Irrespective of its outcomes, Massumi argues that the colour-coded alert system is significant because it reflects the US government’s adoption of a strategy of “affective training” that attempts to engrain a sense of fear in the populace “even in contexts where one is clearly in no present danger” (Massumi, 2005 pp. 40–41). Similarly, regardless of the numbers of people who actually call the anti-terror hotline number, the London Met’s poster campaign is an equally important development: it points to the way in which the UK government also employs the politics of affect in the on-going war on terror. Indeed, it is through the attempt to cultivate citizen-detectives that the central dynamics of the war on terror are (re)produced: dynamics that are not localised in the conflict zones of Afghanistan and Iraq, but identifiable throughout everyday life in Europe and the West more generally.

It might be objected that the London case currently shares more in common with US anti-terrorist initiatives than those found in other parts of Europe. Yet, the messages of the Metropolitan Transport Agency in New York, the London Metropolitan Police Service and the DG for Justice, Security and Freedom share a common focus on the role of the citizen in surveillance practices in the war on terror. Such practices, as a control on the movement of subjects, can be read as an attempted form of bordering not found at the outer edge of sovereign territory, but rather dispersed throughout society. Moves to promote this kind of generalised borderwork mark an attempt at shoring up the borders of sovereign political community by distinguishing between the ‘good’ life of the polis and the ‘risky’ life of the terrorist suspect. Efforts to patrol the borders of Europe in the war on terror are not only reflected in the surveillance activities of Frontex personnel but also in the attempt to mobilise citizens as detectives: both are examples of border guards not necessarily to be found at the border in a conventional sense.

Conclusion

For R. B. J. Walker, the location, character and possibility of contemporary political life are unclear

Almost all the hard questions of our time . . . converge on the status of borders; of boundaries, distinctions, discriminations, inclusions, exclusions, beginnings, endings, limitations and exceptions, and on
their authorization by subjects who are always susceptible to inclusion or exclusion by the borders they are persuaded to authorize (Walker, 2006, p. 57).

Walker encourages an approach to the study of Europe’s borders that refuses to take ‘Europe’ as an already given entity in favour of one that analyses the processes, dynamics and practices through which “Europe can be imagined in terms of a coherent geographical and ontological whole” (Walker, 2000, p. 18). However, Walker warns that Europe’s borders are not necessarily where they are supposed to be found according to the dominant inside/outside framing and points to the need to look beyond the geographical edges of the member-states (Walker, 2000, p. 28). In keeping with Walker’s perspective, this article has sought to contribute to the burgeoning critical literature on the changing nature and increasing complexity of Europe’s borders by exploring different forms of surveillance in the war on terror as examples of borderwork that complicate the dominant inside/outside framing.

As a control on the movement of subjects into and within Europe, practices of surveillance can be read as a form of bordering. Increasingly, such a control takes place in spaces that cannot be readily identified as either internal or external border sites in a simplistic sense. Rather, as discussed in relation to the surveillance of non-EU citizens by Frontex in Africa, the categories of internal/external are increasingly problematised by emerging practices. Nevertheless, through surveillance operations such as HERA I and II, the activities of Frontex contribute to the production of Europe as an ‘area of freedom, security, and justice’ by working to exclude subjects whose entry to that area is deemed to be illegal. In this way, borrowing Etienne Balibar’s seemingly paradoxical formulation, the borderwork of Frontex produces a border that is no longer at the border.

However, surveillance-led bordering in the European context is not only a practice that involves non-EU citizens. On the one hand, by now many scholars have pointed to the enhanced surveillance of EU citizens as a specific response to the perceived threat of terrorism. On the other hand, surveillance among citizens legitimised by the refrain of suspicion in the context of the war on terror has hitherto gone relatively unnoticed. In this context, we have witnessed the (re)-emergence of what I have called the figure of the ‘citizen–detective’: attempts to mobilise a vigilant subject constantly on the look-out for suspicious behaviour not only in civic places but also rather closer to home. The promotion of this form of surveillance constitutes a form of generalised borderwork whereby, again, the borders of sovereign community are (re)produced not only at the edge of territories but throughout society at large. Moreover, whilst the citizen–detective may be more common in New York and London than in some European cities, this vision of detective-citizenship is reflected in nascent initiatives to enjoin EU citizens to act similarly in the context of the on-going war on terror.

References

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